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2 CALLS TO H

...because U.S. is
not being 'sincere'

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News Saipan Bureau

SAIPAN - Palau's Sen. Roman Tmetuchl has questioned whether the Congress of Micronesia can "safely continue to negotiate" with the United States in the face of seeming lack of sincerity on the U.S. side.

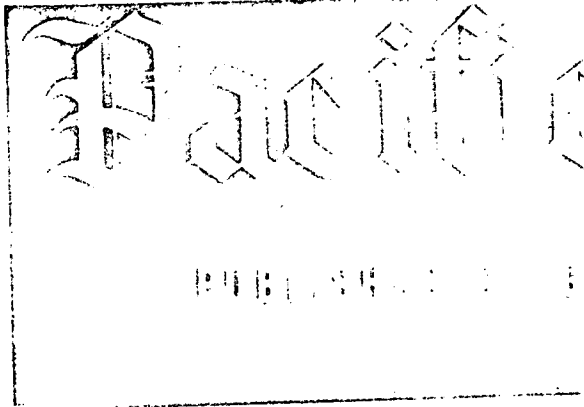
In a statement released here yesterday, Tmetuchl accused

U.S. Ambassador Franklin Hayden Williams of promising one thing, while "the Americans in Saipan or Washington have done something else."

Addressing himself to the question of whether the negotiations can proceed on this basis Tmetuchl said, "So far my colleagues have not faced it or even openly recognized it."

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Tmetucht-Asks If U.S. 'Sincere'

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The text of his statement:

Several disputes have recently arisen in the Micronesian status negotiations. These have included, in the Marianas case, issued regarding land on Tinian, and in Micronesia, over political misunderstandings and the right of education and the right of the Congress to subpoena administration witnesses. Each time it appears that Ambassador Williams has promised something and the Americans in Saipan or Washington have done something else. Now Williams has

asked time to resolve these differences within his government. Is this really necessary or true? It seems questionable.

Ambassador Williams is the personal representative of President Nixon and is in touch with Washington every day he is in Micronesia. Can he really not know what his government wants or will do? It does not seem possible, especially since so far we are dealing only with one branch of United States government, the executive branch. What will happen when the negotiations are finished! Micronesia (or the Marianas) has made many concessions, and then it all goes to

the U.S. Congress for approval? Micronesia has committed itself, but the United States can use its Congress to disapprove and take back every commitment Williams and even Nixon has made to us. And we know that before the negotiations are even finished Americans will begin preparations for their military bases in my own district of Palau just as they now are already doing on Tinian.

Anyone who believes I am too suspicious should look back on the history of Philippine independence in 1946, less than 30 years ago and under the administration of President Truman who only recently

died and is honored as one of America's outstanding presidents. First the Philippines were forced to accept, in return for their promised independence, a constitution essentially written for them by Americans, which granted extraordinary rights both to the United States and to U.S. corporations in the Philippines. Then, with their country largely destroyed by a foreign war first ended on their islands, they were told that the U.S. Congress would only appropriate funds for war claims and reconstruction if the Philippines made further concessions so that, under the principle of "parity" every U.S. citizen who lived in the Philippines had all the rights and privileges accorded to Filipino citizens under their constitution.

After a bitter struggle the Philippine constitution was amended to grant rights of parity, and then the U.S. Congress refused to appropriate more than a small fraction of the money necessary to meet its promises. But by then it was too late to turn back.

Years ago the same thing happened

to the American Indian tribes. We can see this is the way the Americans gain permanent control over the people they have conquered. What are we Micronesians going to do about it?

The leadership and responsibility for Micronesia in these negotiations rests with the Congress of Micronesia through its Joint Committee on Future Status, of which I am a member. So far we have been negotiating as if the government of the United States were acting with sincerity, and as if the things Ambassador Williams has agreed to are commitments by the United States government as a whole. In the face of the evidence before us, can we safely continue to negotiate on this basis? This is a very serious question which deeply affects the lives of all Micronesians and of our children and our children's children. So far my colleagues have not faced it or even openly recognized it.

The Congress of Micronesia and all the people of Micronesia, including the Marianas, must think about this problem and decide realistically what to do about it.

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